



# CONGRESSMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN NEWS

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## WAXMAN ASKS REAGAN TO FILL HUMAN RIGHTS POST

Congressman Henry A. Waxman (D-Los Angeles), has urged President Ronald Reagan to nominate "a statureful and fully qualified person" for the post of Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights at the earliest possible time.

Earlier this year, Reagan nominated Dr. Ernest Lefever for the human rights position. Senate confirmation hearings brought out Lefever's inclination to apply human rights standards harshly only to Communist-bloc countries. Senators of both parties were deeply disturbed by indications that Lefever intended to ignore human rights violations in countries considered 'pro-American' and 'anti-Communist'. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee rejected the Lefever nomination by an overwhelming margin. Lefever withdrew rather than face certain defeat by the full Senate.

Waxman linked the "sordid Lefever affair" to the need for a new and totally acceptable nominee. He said,

"After scrutinizing Dr. Lefever, Congress, the public, and leaders around the world have grave doubts as to where the United States stands on human rights. It is rumored that President Reagan may leave the human rights post vacant indefinitely. This would be tragic. Political dissidents in countries friendly to the United States may well suffer immediate and harsh repression if their leaders concluded that the United States no longer cares about their fate."

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Waxman praised the human rights policy of President Carter and especially of Carter's Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, Patricia Derian.

"On something so fundamental as human rights I see no reason for the Reagan Administration to create a new narrow Republican doctrine. The killings, tortures, and imprisonments that were wrong under the Carter Administration are still wrong. This is one area in which the United States must have continuity of policy if we are to be taken seriously."

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